

Commercial and Industrial Buildings,  
Chicago, Burlington and Northern Railroad  
Passenger Depot  
100 East Third Street  
Dubuque  
Dubuque County  
Iowa

HABS No. IA-160-Z

HABS  
IOWA,  
31-DUBU,  
13-Z -

---

**PHOTOGRAPHS  
HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA**

---

Historic American Buildings Survey  
Department of the Interior  
National Park Service  
Rocky Mountain Regional Office  
P.O. Box 25287  
Denver Colorado 80225

Commercial and Industrial Buildings,

# Chicago, Burlington and Northern Railroad Passenger Depot

HABS,  
IOWA,  
31 - DUBU,  
13-2-

HABS No. IA-160-Z

Site Location: 100 East Third Street  
Dubuque, Dubuque County, Iowa  
DOT designation: Resource Site No. 7.29  
Cadastral grid : SE1/4 NE1/4 S25 T89N R2E  
USGS quadrangle: Dubuque South Iowa 7.5'  
UTM coordinates: 15.692020.4707460  
Lot description: no legal description

Present Owner: Burlington Northern Railroad  
Present Usage: vacant  
Present Condition : fair

Overall Dimensions: 26'x 42'; 1 story  
Orientation : west  
Architectural Description : Plan type : rectangular with slight projections, 1 story.  
Foundation: (below grade)  
Structure : wood frame with brick masonry bearing walls.  
Ext. walls: brick, running bond on lower half, upper story has metal siding.  
Roof : flat composition roof.  
Chimneys : one interior brick chimney located toward west of structure.  
Dormers : none  
Windows : most of the windows have been boarded up, but the fenestration pattern seems to have been vertically cast narrow windows interspersed with wrap-around horizontal bands of glass blocks that are placed high on the projections; glass blocks can still be seen in some of the vertical windows; concrete lug sills.  
Openings : on the east elevation there are three single-leaf entrances - the one furthest to the left has a wooden awning; there is also a garage door on this facade; on the west elevation, toward the south end, is a wooden single door that has an awning and looks as if it once had a fixed light and a transom; two garage doors compose almost the entire north elevation.  
Details : chamfered corners on brick walls.

Construction Date : 1891

Architecture Style: French Cottage (original); International (current)

Physical History : As early as 1882 the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroad sought to tap into the lucrative northwestern market by extending a line from its existing tracks in Illinois to Minneapolis. After conducting surveys, the company formed a subsidiary in 1884 - called the Chicago, Burlington and Northern Railroad [CB&NRR] - and began tracklaying in the summer of 1885. The Illinois Central soon reacted to the formidable competition by trying to impede track construction near Dubuque, building a maze of unnecessary sidings on the constricted Portage Curve to block the Burlington's entry into the city. It required a court settlement to clear the way for the CB&NRR to run tracks to the city.

Once the trackage had been laid, the railroad immediately began planning a depot. "This new Company has bought a large and valuable depot site in our city," a Dubuque business gazetteer reported in 1886, "a fact which adds vastly to the future expectations and promise of Dubuque. This site lies along the north side of the Ice Harbor constructed by the General Government, and on both sides of Third Street extension from its western end to the river front, a length of over 2,500 feet. All together it comprises very large and very valuable depot grounds for the Chicago, Burlington and Northern. This location gives the new line connection with the Illinois Central, the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul, the Dubuque & Northwestern, and with all the river transportation lines, - a fact of peculiar importance and value. When studying all the certainties and probabilities depending upon the introduction of this great line into our city, it will be found difficult to over-estimate the advantages which must accrue to the business and future of Dubuque as a consequence." Also including City Lots 528 and 745, the property reportedly cost the railroad some \$60,000.

For some reason the CB&NRR waited five years before constructing a permanent passenger station. In 1891 the railroad filled in a slough of the Mississippi River and constructed this passenger depot. Described by the *Dubuque Daily Herald* as a French cottage style architecture, the I-1/2-story building was constructed of red brick, with contrasting white limestone trim. It was comprised of a large waiting room, with ticket and business offices; a 26'x 42' baggage room extended from the north end, and a platform surrounded the building. At some point (probably the 1950s, judging by style) the building was completed renovated, the upper story removed and the architecture changed to a modest version of the International Style to reflect the prevailing taste of the time. Though still owned by the railroad, the depot now stands vacant.

Significance: As a remnant of a nationally important rail system, the Chicago, Burlington and Northern Passenger Depot is historically significant. Its extensive alterations, however, have compromised the building's architecture irreparably.

**References:**

Dubuque City Directories: 1857 - 1970.  
Sanborn Insurance Maps: 1879, 1884, 1891, 1909, 1972.  
Iowa State Gazetteer and Business Directory: 1882-1923.  
Iowa Department of Transportation, "Draft Environmental  
Impact Statement - Cultural Resources Assessment."  
Richard C. Overton, *Burlington Route* (New York: Alfred A.  
Knopf, 1965).  
*Dubuque: Its Manufacturing and Commercial Facilities*  
(Dubuque: The Times Company, 1886).  
*Dubuque Daily Herald*: 2 October 1891.

**Compiler:**

Clayton B. Fraser, Fraserdesign, Loveland Colorado  
December 1988.